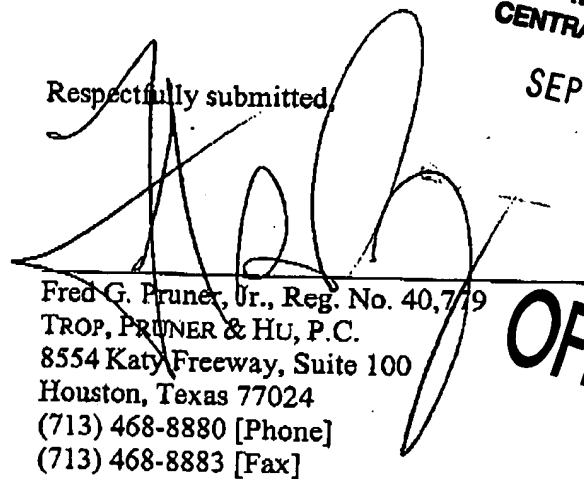


REMARKS

This Amendment is being filed within the time period established by the filing of the Notice of Appeal on July 30, 2003. The Amendment further narrows the issues on appeal by canceling claims and rewriting dependent claims in independent form. More specifically, the Amendment cancels claims 8, 9, 12, 14, 15 and 19; incorporates the additional limitations presented by claim 8 into claim 7; and incorporates the additional limitations presented by claim 13 into claim 12. Thus, entry of the Amendment is requested because 1. the Amendment further narrows the issues on appeal; and 2. no further consideration and/or search by the Examiner is required, as the Examiner has already considered dependent claims 8 (now rewritten in independent form as claim 7) and 13 (now rewritten in independent form as claim 12). In view of the Amendment, claims 7 and 13 (which have been finally rejected) and claims 20-27 (which have been allowed) remain in the application.

No fee is believed due with the Amendment, because the Amendment is being filed within the time period established by the filing of the Notice of Appeal on July 30, 2003. The Commissioner is authorized to charge any additional fees or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 20-1504 (ITL.0294US).

Respectfully submitted,


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